

Message Text

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FROM VON DEN STEINEN

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SWEL, TPHY, PINT, TU
SUBJECT: VAN EARTHQUAKE RELIEF EFFORT: DOMESTIC
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

1. MY IMPRESSION GAINED DURING TWO AND ONE-HALF DAYS AT VAN AND DISASTER SITE IS THAT QUESTION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF GOT RELIEF EFFORT COULD BECOME A SIGNIFICANT SHORT-TERM DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUE. REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN ECEVIT IS SCHEDULED TO MAKE MAJOR PULICA APPEARANCE IN VAN DECEMBER 3 AND WILL PROBABLY TOUR DISASTER AREA EITHER PRECEDING OR FOLLOWING SPEECH. I SPOKE WITH SEVERAL RPP FIGURES WHO WILL MOST CERTAINLY ENCOURAGE ECEVIT TO ACCUSE GOVERNMENT OF INEFFICIENCY, CALLOUSNESS, AND POLITICAL FAVORITISM. IT IS ALSO CONCEIVABLE (THOUGH UNLIKELY) THAT THE QUESTION OF ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE KURDS MIGHT ARISE. (THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THOSE RENDERED HOMELESS REPORTEDLY ARE KURDS.)

2. TURKISH PRESS REPRESENTATIVES IN VAN, IN THEIR CON-
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VERSATIONS WITH ME, WERE OPENLY AND UNIFORMLY CRITICAL

OF BOTH THE GOVERNMENT'S AND THE TURKISH RED CRESCENT'S LACK
OF LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION. THOSE PERSONALLY
ASSOCIATED WITH THE RPP (E.G., CUMHURIYET CORRESPONDENT)
WERE OUTSPOKEN IN CHARGING POLITICAL FAVORITISM--I.E.,
CLAIMING THAT VILLAGES WHICH VOTED JP GOT MORE AID.
RPP MAYOR OF MURADIYE REPORTEDLY OPENLY ACCUSED GOT SEVERAL DAYS
AGO OF DISCRIMINATING AGAINST HIM IN HOLDING BACK
DISTRIBUTION OF TENTS.

3. DESPITE THESE CRITICISMS, RPP REPRESENTATIVES WERE,
HOWEVER, UNIFORM IN PRAISING U.S. HELP WHICH THEY FEARED
WAS BEING MALADMINISTRATED.
MACOMBER

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